



## U.S. Mission San Jose

Vacancy Announcement Number: 2017-010

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**OPEN TO:** All Interested Candidates

**POSITION:** FEDERAL BENEFITS CLAIMS REPRESENTATIVE,  
FSN-7 (TRAINEE) TO FSN-9 , FP-7 (TRAINEE)\* TO FP-5

**OPENING DATE:** April 10, 2017

**CLOSING DATE:** May 01, 2017

**WORK HOURS:** Full-time 40 hours/week

**SALARY:** \* Not-Ordinarily Resident (NOR): US\$35,718 annual (Starting salary)  
(Position Grade: FP-7 is confirmed by Washington)

\* Ordinarily Resident (OR): ₡615,751.07 monthly (Starting salary)  
(Position Grade: FSN-7)

The “Open To” category listed above refers to candidates who are eligible to apply for this position. The “Open To” category should not be confused with a “hiring preference” which is explained later in this vacancy announcement.

**ALL ORDINARILY RESIDENT (OR) APPLICANTS (See Appendix for definition) MUST HAVE THE REQUIRED WORK AND/OR RESIDENCY PERMITS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION.**

The U.S. Embassy in San Jose is seeking an individual for the position of Federal Benefits Claims Representative in the Federal Benefits Unit.

**NOTE:** Due to the high volume of applications received, we will only contact applicants who are being considered. Thank you for your understanding.

### BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION

This is the expert level for Federal Benefits Claims Representatives responsible for developing and processing the full range of the most difficult, complex, and responsible federal benefits related claims work, which frequently requires comprehensive investigations to determine initial and continuing benefit eligibility. The incumbent prepares and submits complete and authoritative final adjudication packages to the Social Security Administration (SSA) for final action. Although the most extensive federal benefits program involves SSA benefits and services, the incumbent is also responsible for any claims work involving the benefit programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA), the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Railroad Retirement Board (RRB), and the Department of Labor (DOL).

**A copy of the complete position description listing all duties and responsibilities is at the end of this job announcement.**

**QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED:**

Applicants must address each required qualification listed below with specific information supporting each item. Failure to do so may result in a determination that the applicant is not qualified.

1. **EDUCATION:** Two more years of college or university studies is required.
2. **EXPERIENCE:** Three years of experience in work involving the application of complex regulatory material along with extensive public contact or other closely related experience. Highly customer service skills and ability to communicate with a wide range of customers is required.

**-OR-**

- (1) Completion of secondary schooling is required.
  - (2) Five years of experience in work involving the application of complex regulatory material along with extensive public contact or other closely related experience.
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3. **LANGUAGE:** Level 4 (Fluent) Speaking/Writing **English, Portuguese and Spanish** ability is required. This will be tested.
  4. **SKILLS AND ABILITIES:** Must have the ability to develop and maintain a wide variety of outside contacts, especially incident to old investigation work such as with Embassy staff, local registrars and other local government officials. Must be able to work independently and use tact and sound judgment in dealing with the public, as well as sound writing and interviewing capabilities and exceptional organizational skills. Incumbent must provide information and resolve any emerging problems via phone, emails or face to face with our beneficiaries with accuracy and efficiency. The incumbent must ensure excellent service standards and maintain high customer satisfaction.
  5. **JOB KNOWLEDGE:** Must be proficient in the use of Microsoft Office applications (e.g., Word, Excel and Outlook). Must have a valid driver's license.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Please contact the Human Resources Office at 2519-2374

**HIRING PREFERENCE SELECTION PROCESS:** When qualified, applicants in the following hiring preference categories are extended a hiring preference in the order listed below. Therefore, it is essential that these applicants accurately describe their status on the application. Failure to do so may result in a determination that the applicant is not eligible for a hiring preference.

**HIRING PREFERENCE ORDER:**

- (1) AEFM / USEFM who is a preference-eligible U.S. Veteran\*
- (2) AEFM / USEFM
- (3) FS on LWOP\*\*

**\* IMPORTANT:** Applicants who claim status as a preference-eligible U.S. Veteran must submit a copy of the most recent Member Copy Four (4) of the DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, and, if applicable, a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. If claiming conditional eligibility for U.S. Veterans' preference, applicants must submit proof of conditional eligibility. If the written documentation confirming eligibility is not received in the HR office by the closing date of the vacancy announcement, the U.S. Veterans' preference will not be considered in the application process. Mission HR's decision on eligibility for U.S. Veterans' preference after reviewing all required documentation is final.

**\*\*** This level of preference applies to all Foreign Service employees on LWOP.

#### **ADDITIONAL SELECTION CRITERIA:**

1. Management may consider any of the following when determining successful candidacy: nepotism, conflicts of interest, budget, and residency status.
2. Current OR employees serving a probationary period are not eligible to apply. Current OR employees with an Overall Summary Rating of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory on their most recent Employee Performance Report (EPR) are not eligible to apply.
3. Current NOR employees hired on a Family Member Appointment (FMA) or a Personal Service Agreement (PSA) are not eligible to apply within the first 90 calendar days of their employment, unless they have a When Actually Employed (WAE) work schedule.
4. The candidate must be able to obtain and hold the following: **local security certification.**
5. Candidates who are EFM, USEFM, AEFM, or MOH must have at least one year remaining on their sponsor's tour of duty to be considered eligible to apply for this position.

**HOW TO APPLY:** Applicants must submit the following documents to be considered. Failure to do so may result in a determination that the applicant is not qualified.

1. Universal Application for Employment (UAE) (Form DS-174), which is available on our website.
2. Any additional documentation that supports or addresses the requirements listed above (e.g. transcripts, degrees, etc.)

\*Please note that the HR Office will accept applications until **COB** of the closing date, any applications received **after COB** (16.30hrs) *will not* be processed.

#### **WHERE TO APPLY:**

##### **Human Resources Office**

E-mail Address: [jobsembassysanjose@state.gov](mailto:jobsembassysanjose@state.gov)

**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY:** The U.S. Mission provides equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment in employment to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, marital status, or sexual orientation. The Department of State

also strives to achieve equal employment opportunity in all personnel operations through continuing diversity enhancement programs. The EEO complaint procedure is not available to individuals who believe they have been denied equal opportunity based upon marital status or political affiliation. Individuals with such complaints should avail themselves of the appropriate grievance procedures, remedies for prohibited personnel practices, and/or courts for relief.

## **Appendix (DEFINITIONS)**

**Eligible Family Member (EFM):** An EFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets **all** of the following criteria:

- U.S. Citizen or not a U.S. Citizen; **and**
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610); **or**
- Child, who is unmarried and under 21 years of age or, regardless of age, is incapable of self-support; **or**
- Parent (including stepparents and legally adoptive parents) of employee, spouse, or same-sex domestic partner, when such parent is at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support; **or**
- Sister or brother (including stepsisters and stepbrothers, or adoptive sisters or brothers) of the employee, spouse, or same-sex domestic partner when such sibling is at least 51 percent dependent on the employee for support, unmarried, and under 21 years of age, or regardless of age, incapable of self-support; **and**
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; **and**
- Is under chief of mission authority.

**U.S. Citizen Eligible Family Member (USEFM):** A USEFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets **all** of the following criteria:

- U.S. Citizen; **and**
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610) of the sponsoring employee; **or**
- Child of the sponsoring employee who is unmarried and at least 18 years old; **and**
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and resides at the sponsoring employee's post of assignment abroad, or as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; and is under chief of mission authority; **or**
- resides at an Involuntary Separate Maintenance Allowance (ISMA) location authorized under 3 FAM 3232.2; **or**
- Currently receives a U.S. Government retirement annuity or pension from a career in the U.S. Foreign Service or Civil Service.

**Appointment Eligible Family Member (AEFM):** An AEFM for employment purposes is an individual who meets **all** of the following criteria:

- U.S. Citizen; **and**
- Spouse or same-sex domestic partner (as defined in 3 FAM 1610) of the sponsoring employee; **or**

- Child of the sponsoring employee who is unmarried and at least 18 years old; **and**
- Listed on the travel orders or approved Form OF-126 of a sponsoring employee, i.e., a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT); **and**
- Is under chief of mission authority; **and**
- Is residing at the sponsoring employee's post of assignment abroad or, as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; **and**
- Does **NOT** currently receive a U.S. Government retirement annuity or pension from a career in the U.S. Foreign Service or Civil Service.

**Member of Household (MOH):** An individual who accompanies or joins a sponsoring employee, i.e., sponsor is a direct hire employee under Chief of Mission authority, either Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member who is permanently assigned to or stationed abroad at a U.S. mission, or at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan. A MOH is an individual who meets the following criteria:

- (1) Not an EFM and therefore not on the travel orders or approved through form OF-126 Foreign Service Residence and Dependency Report of the sponsoring employee; and
- (2) Officially declared by the sponsoring U.S. Government employee to the Chief of Mission (COM) as part of his or her household and approved by the COM; and
- (3) Is a parent, grandparent, grandchild, unmarried partner, adult child, foreign born child in the process of being adopted, father, mother, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister who falls outside the Department's current definition of Eligible Family Member 14 FAM 511.3. A MOH may or may not be a U.S. Citizen.

**Not Ordinarily Resident (NOR)** – An individual who meets the following criteria:

- An EFM, USEFM or AEFM of a direct-hire Foreign Service, Civil Service, or uniformed service member permanently assigned or stationed abroad, or as appropriate, at an office of the American Institute in Taiwan; or
- Has diplomatic privileges and immunities; and
- Is eligible for compensation under the FS or GS salary schedule; and
- Has a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN); and
- Is not a citizen of the host country; and
- Does not ordinarily reside in the host country; and
- Is not subject to host country employment and tax laws.

**Ordinarily Resident (OR)** – An individual who meets the following criteria:

- A citizen of the host country; or
- A non-citizen of the host country (including a U.S. citizen or a third-country national) who is locally resident and has legal and/or permanent resident status within the host country and/or who is a holder of a non-diplomatic visa/work and/or residency permit; and/or
- Is subject to host country employment and tax laws.

## **Major Duties and Responsibilities**

## 1. Claims Development and Processing

Develops, analyzes and processes the wide spectrum of claims covering the full range of federal benefits for which they are eligible, including a substantial number of the most complex claims involving the most difficult technical issues. Interviews applicants, advises inquirers of the type(s) of benefits for which they are eligible, including DOL Black Lung. Obtains requisite information and supporting documentation. Interprets applicable laws, regulations, policies and procedures. Assists applicants in securing evidence, and examines and evaluates presented evidence to evaluate its validity and acceptability in establishing entitlement to benefits. Provides expert analytical opinions in resolution for evidentiary discrepancies.

Develops and prepares the full range of federal benefits claims to the point of final adjudication. This requires researching and documenting conclusions on all issues that could affect the type and amount of benefits entitlements. In the development of disability claims, safeguards the integrity of the disability process by selecting appropriate qualified medical sources, evaluating medical reports and re-contacting sources for clarification or additional information, and recommending consultative exams where appropriate. Schedules special consultative medical examinations, evaluates the amounts billed for consultative examinations, and negotiates with physicians, clinics, and/or hospitals to obtain reasonable fees.

Independently develops and thoroughly documents cases involving fraud and/or complex points of law. Conducts interviews, and if necessary, extensive off-site field investigations. Drafts detailed reports with authoritative recommendations for final adjudication by the appropriate federal agency. Effectively utilize automation to achieve business results.

Advises potential claimants of the provision of the law regarding special complications such as reduced retirement benefits versus disability/survivor benefits. Provides information to claimants regarding reconsideration and subsequent administrative appeals right as defined under applicable law. Assists claimants in filing for reconsideration or an appeal. Prepares the case and routes it to the appropriate Federal agency.

Develops and resolves the most complex post entitlement issues resulting from suspension, resumption, continuation, or termination of payments, and re-entitlement in erroneous termination cases. Analyzes and evaluates bank records to resolve payment discrepancies. Works with local banks on complex cases to recall, reclaim, or interpret benefits that are not payable. If necessary, contacts the estate or relatives of deceased beneficiaries to reclaim such benefits.

Responds to a variety of verbal and written inquiries that frequently involve complex and/or contentious issues. For example, explains alien taxation and alien non-payment, computations such as the windfall elimination provision and a variety of benefit offsets such as the government pension offsets, worker's compensation offsets, and public disability offset.

Conducts investigations involving the most difficult, sensitive, and complex disability claims and program integrity work. Exercises a considerable degree of independence when conducting out-of-the-office investigations through on-site visits and complicated inquiries. Develops claims from applicants who due to the nature of their disability, e.g. blindness, hearing loss, etc, are prevented from filing an in-person or tele-claim. Performs representative payee audits and overpayment collections. Verifies questionable vital statistics documents by comparison to official records. Writes detailed reports for submission to the appropriate agency on results of investigation. Establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with a wide range of working level contacts within the host country local community, e.g. educational banking and medical institutions, churches, government agencies, etc.